



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Chief Financial Officer
Assistant Secretary for Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

December 20, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR

Commerce CFO Council

FROM:

Michael S. Sade
Director for Acquisition Management
and Procurement Executive

Deborah A. Jefferson
Acting Director for Human
Resources Management

SUBJECT: Commerce Acquisition Manual (CAM) Chapter 1301.2,
Contracting Officer's Technical Representative Certification Program

The President has stated that his agenda is to create a results-oriented government, focused on performance, standards and accountability, to ensure resources are used and managed wisely. As the Department of Commerce (DOC) continues to contract for more of our critical services, our Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives (COTR) play an increasingly important role. As part of the acquisition team, they ensure resources are obtained and administered to meet program objectives, and ultimately, to achieve mission success. Further, implementing performance measures for all programs will require COTRs, and other members of the team, to develop enhanced skills in program management and performance measure development, implementation, and utilization.

The Department recently revised the policy on the training and certification of Contracting Officers and Specialists as a first step toward developing the acquisition team of the future. Revision of the Department's COTR program policy to emphasize results is the logical next step to achieve mission success. The DOC Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) has developed a comprehensive plan to revise the current COTR Certification Program to emphasize performance management and performance measurement. The first phase in the revision process comprised development of a consistent DOC COTR definition and alignment of COTR job descriptions and performance plans with assigned contract management duties.

OAM has partnered with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) to develop sample COTR performance element and standards language for both five and two-level appraisal systems for inclusion in COTR performance plans. The accompanying amendment to the DOC COTR Certification Program requires inclusion

of COTR performance measurement in performance plans of all individuals performing COTR duties when those duties make up 20% or more of the individual's job responsibilities, all COTRs certified at Levels 2 and 3, and where a comparable element or language does not already exist. The sample performance element and standards language is intended to be used as a guide for supervisors who may elect to include the language in the performance plan as a separate element or to adapt the language as necessary for incorporation into an existing performance element. Supervisors of individuals performing COTR duties should work with their respective human resources management specialists who will assist with the inclusion of the contract management performance element language into their employees' performance plans.

The accompanying amendment revising the DOC COTR Certification Program is effective October 1, 2002. Amendment of performance plans to include the required COTR performance element and standards language must be completed no later than March 30, 2003. Recertification of current COTRs is not necessary at this time. However, OAM will continue to make improvements to the DOC COTR Certification Program through reviewing COTR training requirements and seeking improved avenues of communication to relay COTR requirements and standards. It is anticipated that our improvement initiative will result in required recertification of all COTRs as well as enhanced performance of the acquisition team.

If you have any questions concerning the above, please contact Curtina Arnold at (202) 482-4186 for acquisitions-related issues, or your servicing HR specialist for performance management guidance.

Attachment

cc: Acquisition Council
Principal Human Resources Managers
Servicing Human Resources Managers